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## ABSTRACT

The author defines the human services professional as one who is "able to establish professional relationships, to counsel, to teach, supervise, research, to work with the community and to act as a change agent." Historical factors leading to the emergence of the human services professional are outlined. Also described is an educational model and curriculum for training the human services professional using a competency based plan. (MPJ)

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THE FOUNDING OF A NEW PROFESSION

- THE HUMAN SERVICE PROFESSIONAL -

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This morning you worked hard at the game which was designed to help us all quickly see the dimensions of what has to be done. I am sure there are unanswered questions and that while we are more cognizant of the problems and challenges and even the potential value in the new human service profession, we are still not totally clear about its implications for our present credentialing system, for new kinds of education, for new institutions and for organizations for service. But most of all, we are still not totally clear about its implications for the role of the individual human being in our society.

Despite what appears to be increasing impersonalization, there are significant indications in our society of a strong movement to reverse this state, to restore the individual to a new level of centrality and prominence. It is our belief that there is an urgent need in our society for a profession which will be centered on the individual, a profession which will focus on preparing humane human service professionals to help millions of individuals grow and achieve justice in an increasingly complex and quickly changing world. These signs, appearing as they do as scientific discoveries, bold social movements, new aspirations for work and experimental forms of higher education, offer us the magnificent opportunity to reaffirm the role of the

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individual. We at the College for Human Services are offering a solution in the field of higher education as our small part of this large and growing movement both in the sciences and the humanities.

I find strength in the belief that there seem to be millions of Americans who are beginning to realize once again that it is the individual who must take precedence over the system, the technology and the indifference of bureaucracy. And the College's decision to create a new profession of Human Services is only part of that greater movement in this country to restore the individual to center stage.

Perhaps as part of the morning's experience you have had a moment to speculate on why we have not seen the development of a new profession in the human services before now. All of us are familiar with the rapid growth of careers that has accompanied increasing knowledge in the physical sciences. Astrophysics was unheard of a generation ago; so was computer programming; so were the space experiments and the scores of technical professions they have spawned.

We are having a corresponding break-through in the behavioral sciences; yet no new profession in the helping areas has evolved from these scientific developments. Rather, the procedure in the people centered professions seems to be that you proliferate college courses - offer the new knowledge as new fare in the smorgasbord - but you do not question the basic assumptions upon which this process rests or think searchingly about new institutional forms and structures in order to fuse the new knowledge with the old and make all of it relate to practice in the 1970's.

It is possible but highly improbable that people really believe that our present systems of service delivery are adequate. Are enough

people being helped? Are problems disappearing? It is hard to find evidence for an affirmative response when every day we read stories that are a direct result of a break down of these services.

Somehow we are not moving in a clear consistent fashion to analyze our social problems and to put our new knowledge to work on them. We seem to be doing no more than ameliorating some problems and leaving others untouched.

In an article discussing the conflicts that exist in the various helping professions today, Nathan Glazer has described four major problems which vividly define the current professional stance. He finds four major sources of conflict in the helping professions of teaching, social work, guidance, planning, nursing, etc. I think they help explain why a new profession has not emerged.

1. Those who teach the potential practitioners are frequently scholars or researchers, rarely practitioners. In fact, pressure is strong to replace the few practicing members of the profession who are teaching with representatives of scholarly disciplines because of the prestige which the presence of scholars brings to an institution. It is questionable whether students are taught the most useful knowledge for the intended occupation and students often enter work situations of which their teachers have only theoretical knowledge.

Preparation to become a scholar and teacher outranks study for the major professional role of teacher, nurse, etc.

Faculty is, in large measure, trained in the disciplines, and most try to reproduce in the students an image of themselves. There is a subtle attempt to seduce the most promising students into the

disciplines. Because of the tension between disciplinary and professional models and roles, tensions and conflicts arise. The students' level of anxiety increases as they must decide which model to choose.

2. In the helping professions being discussed, the principal profession of teacher, social worker, etc. is inferior in status and reputation to its ancillary subprofessions. In other words, the status of the administrator, the principal, the supervisor, is superior to that of the practitioner.

The result is that faculty - both practitioner and scholar - as well as students, gravitate toward the high status roles of administrators and researchers and tend to neglect services. Thus, not enough attention is focused on preparing the students for the role of practitioner.

3. By and large, degrees in the traditional disciplines (economics, political science, history) outrank the professional degrees of education, social work, etc.

4. The content of accepted professional knowledge and training undergoes rapid and upsetting change.

There is no general agreement on what constitutes competent performance in the helping professions. As new knowledge is generated, courses shift, new emphases surface, but purposeful and consistent organizing themes do not develop.

How can we satisfy the strong desire on the part of many students to learn the best practice and to apply it on behalf of the client? Students who want to "do," to serve, often find themselves in conflict with the goals of the professional schools.

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I would like to juxtapose this gloomy description of professional schools and practitioners with the positive forces I see emerging in our society in support of the individual. I think they offer hope that we can build a professional education that supports those who wish to solve human problems as practitioners. As I analyze these forces I feel certain that we can provide an appropriate response to the problems of our world by reshaping education so that the full development of the individual is not just a goal but an attainable goal not just for a few, but for many.

From the sciences come startling findings that challenge long accepted theses and that will probably change society. We now know that each side of the brain controls different aspects of learning and the implication is that we will be able to use this knowledge to accelerate and increase learning. Bio feedback is causing a scientific revolution whose reverberations will be felt in the field of education, particularly in commonly held theories of intelligence. The finding that people can now control many functions believed to be involuntary has been well expressed by one bio feedback participant. "It's as if your body has always been an automatic pilot, and suddenly you find you can take over the controls."<sup>(1)</sup> Marilyn Ferguson, author of the book, The Brain Revolution, states in her introduction, "Science and the humanities have converged in the most unexpected way. In order to describe the wonders they have come upon, brain researchers have begun quoting Buddha and William Blake, and poets and mystics long fearful of the dehumanizing aspects of science now cite laboratory

(1) Marilyn Ferguson, The Brain Revolution, Taplinger, N.Y. 1973, p.32

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reports to verify what they have long held as intuitive knowledge... As Abe Maslow observed, although visionary artists and mystics may be correct in their insights, they can never make the whole of mankind sure. "Science...is the only way we have of shoving truth down the (2) reluctant throat."

The success achieved to date in using computers to teach language to chimpanzees turns upside down the pronouncements of prominent psychologists that it couldn't be done. Having been fixated on verbal language, these psychologists are now forced to rethink accepted "tenets." If chimpanzees with their less complex brains can achieve language and invent concepts, then surely humans may have mental capabilities for individual achievement that we have not yet touched.

Science is even playing a major part in women's liberation. The scientific and technological advances of the last 100 years have released women from stereotyped chores; recent scientific research indicates that individual, learned differences are far more significant than inborn, sexual differences. And since our knowledge of the evolutionary process indicates that women have evolved at least as significantly as men, I see women's liberation as one more growing sign that the individual is gaining supremacy over the total cultural gestalt which until now we have permitted to slot males and females into very different and unequal roles.

In the book Working, Studs Terkel's astonishing and touching study of Americans, we see the extent to which so many Americans, female and male, are dissatisfied with their daily lives. People are yearning to find affirmation of their individuality in the dignity of and recognition

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for their work. If there is one theme emerging from Working, it is the literally crying need to be purposeful, useful, and to stand center stage over the machinery and the system.

All the new knowledge and the humming of desire should be harnessed to help the individual gain increasing control over him/herself and his/her work. The scientific advances not only can put control into the hands of the individual, they are the new tools for social justice. The major questions are how we can organize higher education to help people utilize this and other knowledge, focus it on solving problems, work to pull together the currently fragmented systems of education and service delivery, and help the individual, both as practitioner and citizen, to become part of the solution.

After years of struggling with these concepts, the College for Human Services believes that it has succeeded in developing a significantly different and useful educational model organized around the competency principle. I would like to describe it briefly to you, taking a few moments to also trace the development of the College. In the process I hope to introduce you to our new vocabulary as well as to our ideas.

The College began as a new idea in 1964 as the Women's Talent Corps and opened in 1966 as a program for talented women from low-income communities whose motivation and life experience indicated potential for human service work. Opening up above entry jobs in urban agencies where these community women could work as they trained was a major effort of the early years. We tapped all the helping professions, establishing in each positions that had never before existed. These early efforts,

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both conceptual and practical, established the College as a founder and leader in the "New Careers" movement. (One of the principle examples was that of teacher assistant. This involved convincing the United Federation of Teachers and the Board of Education of the need for a new pedagogical role in the classroom. As a result of this effort, there are today over 16,000 persons employed as educational assistants in New York City alone, where, in 1966-67, there were none.)

In order to prepare persons effectively for this new position and for many others created by the College - social work assistant, guidance assistant, research assistant, counselor, legal services assistant, community health worker, for example - we focused our program on a blend of theory and practice. These efforts led to a core curriculum that was generic to all the fields and supported our students in their new careers as preprofessionals in their own communities.

By 1970, enrollment had grown to over 200 students, a second year had been added, men were admitted and the Talent Corps had evolved into the College for Human Services. In May of that year it was chartered by the New York State Board of Regents with authority to grant an Associate of Arts degree in the Human Services to those persons who completed the greatly expanded, theory and practice curriculum. By 1974, just before the new professional program was launched, over 600 students had completed the first year. 92% of them were immediately placed in permanent, preprofessional positions and, of these, over 300 had returned on released time from their agencies to complete the second year and to receive Associate of Arts degrees.

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A new kind of worker emerged - and thousands of counterparts began to appear across the country as community colleges and other programs adopted and adapted the initial concepts. Here was a worker giving close, personal and generally improved service to individuals.

But this was not enough. It did not, in the end, provide what seemed to us at the College a logical conclusion to the exciting experiment. The students could not go beyond their credential, that is beyond the Associate degree, despite high performance levels. Within the employ and administration of the helping agencies there were many who could not accept the obvious professionalism our graduates brought to these positions without this professionalism being designated by a full, graduate degree. Conversely, there were no models of educational institutions operating in tandem with agencies to think through all the implications of service delivery, to accept the total blending of theory and practice as a way to arrive at full professionalism, and to award a full professional degree for this method of preparation. Therefore, instead of providing the performance oriented alternative route to full professionalism that had been anticipated, paraprofessional positions, by and large, proved a dead end. Certainly, there was the occasional individual who, through extraordinary effort and ambition, managed to accumulate enough course credits to eventually move up the career ladder. But generally, no higher educational opportunities existed which allowed the preprofessional to use his/her considerable practical experience as part of a learning process.

What remained was the need for the College itself to build that

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alternative educational model, to reorganize theoretical material around performance goals, to use the humanities, the liberal arts and other traditional disciplines as rich theoretical sources, bringing together diverse strands and relating them to real performance issues to provide the credential that signified full professionalism. Here would be the ultimate blend of theory and practice. Here is the College's task.

We have also had to develop a vocabulary with which we try to express this uniqueness and clarify it to others. When we first put the phrase "human services" together - that was in 1969 - no one was then familiar with that term, and some professionals tried to dissuade us from using it. I remember one school superintendent who assured me that no one would even remember it. Now many states have commissions and committees to study service delivery, and they have taken over the words human services to describe these. Many universities are instituting divisions of human services just as they now have schools of business administration. Unfortunately, in most cases it does not represent anything really new or significant for changing service delivery. On the contrary, it is a new umbrella for the old schools of education, social work, etc.

We realize that a new vocabulary will not assure change, but we are hoping that a brand new vocabulary, describing a brand new process, will encourage academics to adopt more than our name and move with us this time all the way to the culmination of a great experiment begun in the early '60's on behalf of humanity.

One thing we did in the process of reorganizing higher education

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was to do research with and on competent professionals to determine what it is that effective professionals in the helping areas really do. Simultaneously, we examined ourselves and graduates of our own A.A. program and came up with several lists of professional competencies which we finally organized as the grid you see before you. This grid represents our effort to restructure education around a new organizing principle that helps make conscious for each of us as learners, the purpose, values, skills and systems that are ever present as we function in society.

Let's look at the grid together a little more carefully. On the left, and numbered, are the eight major competency crystals we have identified as generic to the effective human service professional. Each competency crystal is a performance goal, a statement of behavior that is clearly value based and directed at a purpose. Students do not take the major part of their work as courses. Instead, they enter a competency crystal, and study it from the five dimensions which are indicated across the top of your grid. These dimensions are part of each competency. The dimensions represent our effort to join social values to intellectual pursuits, and behaviorism to humanism. They are like a giant prism taking the competency and opening it for examination revealing all the important angles. Taken together, the competencies add up to a definition of the human service professional. This definition should be clear enough on the one hand, to help students understand what they must do to become competent professionals and, on the other hand, to serve as criteria of professional mastery that will be acceptable to employers, licensing organizations and the public.

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The competency crystals describe what one actually needs to know and do in order to be a competent professional. Thus the competencies outlined on your grid are major constructive actions that serve as the focal points around which the curriculum will be organized and developed. Each competency crystal in turn will serve as the center around which learning experiences are clustered and assessed. Together, the competency crystals describe the new professional; that is, the Human Service Professional is someone able to establish professional relationships, to counsel, teach, supervise, research, to work with the community and to act as a change agent - and all of this is directed to improving human services.

Let's look at competency #3 "to work with people in groups, helping to establish clear goals and achieve optimum results." Let us assume that a student has entered this competency and let us go with that student, at least a little way through his or her experience. The first dimension involves setting realistic and appropriate goals for the particular group with whom the student works. When assessed in this dimension, a student must have demonstrated reasonable success in helping the particular group in an agency achieve its common purpose. One of the value issues involved in this competency - and here we move across the top of the grid to the next dimension - might involve questioning the extent to which the group is more important than the individual - or vice versa. The issue might be clarified if the practitioner were familiar with Rousseau's Theory on the Social Contract, with John Rawles' book on the Theory of Justice, and other similar material.

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Proceeding to the dimension, understanding oneself and others, it becomes clear, I think, that understanding the various ways people behave in groups is very important. Warren Bennis' book "Interpersonal Dynamics" might be part of such a study. So might Machiavelli's "The Prince," as well as such highly contemporary writings as "Deliverance" or "Alive." What does understanding systems have to do with our competency? There are existing systems which may well determine whether or not a group can reach its goals, and both the professional and the group had better know how to deal with these systems. In this particular competency, "working effectively with groups," systems can range from something as complex as the City of New York's budgetary system to one far less complicated but one that more directly exerts its power on the professional and the client - that is, the very agency from which the client seeks assistance and where the professional is employed.

The final dimension deals with skills, and these can be crucial to working effectively in groups. These necessary skills can range from more or less simple ones - such as process note taking for the behavior of the group - to more complex skills which involve decision making and skills of leadership.

Our curriculum grid then, as it shapes and defines our syllabus, provides a new way to organize knowledge content and include content often omitted from professional education programs. Its focus is on the inter-connectedness, relatedness and coherence of the social sciences, the humanities, and professional disciplines. All serve to illuminate performance and impact on service delivery.

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To blend theory and practice and pull together knowledge and experience, students spend 2 days a week at the College and 3 days a week in a supervised field experience in an operating human service agency. Students close each day at the College in a field focus group. Here they review the work of the day and discuss how to apply it to solving the real life problems of clients in the agencies in which they are practicing.

The Field Placement

The field setting provides the primary source for the student's growing experience. It is the place where the student must test out her or his self-perception of competence, where the "conscious use of self" becomes not only concept and ideal, but a working principle. In the field, supported by the agency supervisor and the College teacher, students learn to deal with the inevitable tension between the desirable and the possible.

Critical to the field experience is the relationship which the College builds with cooperating agencies. This relationship is not left to chance or choice but, like other aspects of the program, is carefully constructed to ensure the greatest possibility of success.

Each agency the College works with agrees to assist the College in preparing one or more students for jobs which the students themselves will help to create within the agency and to actively participate in the assessment process which is in itself part of the total learning experience. Thus, the agency has a stake in the success of the program, and its decision to work with the College represents a commitment to the program. The College maintains total responsibility for the selection of agencies and only negotiates an agreement when it is

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certain that the agency understands its goals and is prepared to work with the College for their achievement.

The interconnection between study and practice is firmly established by the assessment process. When assessment is continuous with learning, it can become a powerful element in the learning process.

We are developing methods of assessment that draw on the student, the supervisor, the faculty member, and the citizens receiving service to determine whether constructive action has been attained - whether competency is clear. We call this the holistic assessment. It is based on performance in the agency and involves, on the part of the student, an understanding of theory as well as its practice. The student must be able to show and then explain performance and illustrate graphically that he/she can do, understands, relates action to purpose, as well as theoretical material, learns from the experience and improves service delivery.

This new educational model which I have taken the time only to outline is described in great detail in a document which the College is presenting to the New York State Board of Regents requesting permission to award the Master in Human Services degree for successful completion of our 2-year process.

We believe that this competency crystal model may provide a way of turning the traditional learning around so that the student and ultimately the citizen (client) is at the creative center of the process. If our model can do this, then it will indeed have provided the key to a rejuvenation of education and the development of the new profession which is urgently needed today.

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During this afternoon's sessions, we will explore with you the role of the citizen in the new profession.

We are going to ask you to imagine yourself as the client. As a client, do you think that you should know what services to expect or not to expect from a professional? Should you know your rights as a client? What kind of a role do you think you should play in judging or assessing the competency of a professional? It is important to remember that we see assessment as a learning tool, not as a one time test.

In addition to examining your role as the citizen, we would like you to think about the following assumptions which we see as basic to the new human service profession. These assumptions are:

1. The new professional education must encompass the liberal arts and focus the essence of our culture on serving people. In recent decades, the humanities have been insulated from playing a direct role in education for work. Our great cultural heritage is not just educational dressing; it is essential to our understanding of humanity on both a broad and intimate scale.

2. The new profession must seek the potential practitioners whose overriding concerns are for the individual and who are motivated to providing direct service.

3. The new profession must be committed to working with present supervisory personnel in human services agencies, for unless these powerful individuals take a lead in working through the new assessment process, old practices will continue to be perpetuated.

4. The new profession must involve the citizen in assessing service delivery. Continual assessment and reassessment should work to keep this new system from settling into fixed positions and

petrifying.

5. The new profession will help the citizen develop a guide to effective performance, which would help demystify professional practice. The client, whether he be the parent of a public school child, the seeker of better housing, etc., should know exactly what to expect from the professional whose job it is to serve.

Like any proposed change, its eventual acceptance is dependent upon creating and or finding the right climate of opinion. You are among those who help create the climate for new ideas.

You have studied the history of civilizations and you know that the morals, mores, methods and mentality of today are not those of yesterday. You are individuals who keep open minds, who have not decided that the way the world is, is the way the world necessarily should be.

I hope we can work together to see that the new ideas elevate, expand, energize and broaden each individuals options for service. Together we can move to make these ideas tomorrow's accepted tenets.

Let us restore power to people!

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## THE GRID AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE COMPETENCY CRISTALS

| COMPETENCY CRISTALS                                                                          | D<br>I<br>M<br>E<br>N<br>S<br>I<br>O<br>N<br>S | TAKING AS A SPECIFIC EXAMPLE COMPETENCY #3                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                              |                                                | Describe appropriate and realistic purposes and demonstrate reasonable success in achieving them                                                                                                                                                | Demonstrate a clear and consistent understanding of your values and persistence in working for them                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Demonstrate an understanding of yourself and others in relation to your purposes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Demonstrate an understanding of systems in relation to your purposes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 1. Assume responsibility for lifelong development of professional competence                 |                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2. Establish professional relationship at the worksite with co-workers and citizens (pupils) |                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 3. Work with people in groups, helping to establish clear goals and achieve optimum results  |                                                | Demonstrate that you have been reasonably successful in helping a group you are working with in your agency to achieve its common purpose, taking into account the values and performance requirements of the agency, the College and yourself. | Describe your views on the extent to which a group may be more important than its individual members and explain how your views are reflected in your work. Sources might include: <u>The Social Contract</u> , Rousseau<br><u>The Rights of Man</u> , Paine<br><u>A Theory of Justice</u> , Rawls<br><u>An Enemy of the People</u> , Ibsen<br><u>The Prince</u> , Machiavelli | Demonstrate in practice that you understand theoretical approaches to the process for group development. Sources might include: <u>The Small Group</u> , Michael Olmsted<br><u>Interpersonal Dynamics</u> , Warren Bennis et al.<br><u>Group Work with American Youth</u> , Grace Coyle<br><u>Alive</u> , Piers Paul Read | Analyze the professions as groups with a distinct culture, including values, symbols, history, folklore, language and role definitions. Sources might include: <u>The Urban Villagers</u> , Herbert Gans<br><u>Culture &amp; Behavior</u> , Clyde Kluckhohn<br><u>The Masters</u> , C.P. Snow<br><u>The Fire Next Time</u> , James Baldwin                                      |
|                                                                                              |                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Demonstrate an ability to make good use of necessary and appropriate skills                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|                                                                                              |                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Make appropriate use of the following interpersonal skills to support the group process: give support to a new member; test for consensus; clarify present position in relation to goals. Sources will utilize individual expertise as well as, for example: <u>Essentials of Group Work Skills</u> , Helen Phillips<br><u>Language in Thought &amp; Action</u> , S.I. Hayakawa |

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4. Function as a teacher, helping citizens (pupils) to define and achieve appropriate learning goals.

5. Function as a counselor, helping citizens (pupils) resolve problems in a manner that promotes their growth and independence.

6. Function as a community liaison, working with sectors of community to identify community needs and deliver services that meet those needs.

7. Function as a supervisor, teaching, encouraging and enabling other workers to make best use of their abilities on behalf of the citizens.

8. Act as a change agent, planning, researching and promoting programs to improve human service delivery.

\*This is a single example of how the humanities and the social sciences are organized for significance to real performance issues as students focus on becoming effective in the third competency crystal. Space precludes examination of the complete syllabus for that competency crystal.

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